

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 28328 241956Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 SMS-01 EA-10
ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08
OMB-01 TRSE-00 /131 W
-----098876 250805Z /15

R 241759Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6499
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USUN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 28328

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FR, UR, XA
SUBJECT: FRENCH - SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON A/RICA

REF: A) PARIS 25714; B) MOSCOW 19746 (NOTAL)

1. IN AN AUGUST 22 MEETING WITH QUAI AFRICAN DIRECTOR
GEORGY REQUESTED TO DISCUSS OTHER MATTERS, GEORGY
OFFERED SOME FURTHER COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS ON HIS
CONSULTATIONS IN MOSCOW WHICH HAD CLEARLY FASCINATED
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PAGE 02 PARIS 28328 241956Z

HIM. AS WITH AUG 16 READOUT GIVEN TO THE DCM (REF A),
GEORY'S REMARKS ON THIS OCCASION GENERALLY SQUARED
WITH BRIEFING GIVEN TO EMBASSY MOSCOW. ONLY SIGNIFICANT
DIFFERENCE CONCERNS IMPRESSION REF B THAT ILLITCHEV
DID NOT DISCUSS SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. GEORGY VOLUN-
TEERED THAT ILLITCHEV WAS OBSESSED WITH THE SUBJECT IN
THE LIGHT OF THE SINO-JAPANESE TREATY AND MADE CON-

STANT REFERENCES TO THE CHINESE THROUGHOUT HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSULTATIONS. GEORGY DID NOT DETAIL THESE COMMENTS.

2. GEORGY SAID THAT LOOKING BACK ON HIS TALKS IN MOSCOW HE HAS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE TWO MAJOR AREAS OF INTEREST IN AFRICA: NORTH AFRICA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA. AS FOR THE REST OF THE CONTINENT, THEY HAVE NOT ABANDONED THEIR POLICIES BUT APPEAR NOW TO BE "IN A PERIOD OF REFLECTION".

3. GEORGY'S COMMENTS ON THE RUSSIAN INTEREST IN NORTH AFRICA WERE LARGELY AN ELABORATION OF HIS PREVIOUS REMARKS (REF A) WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC TIES WITH MOROCCO ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF PHOSPHATES AND FISHERIES. HE COMMENTED ALSO THAT THE CURRENT MORE BALANCED SOVIET POSTURE VIS A VIS ALGERIA AND MOROCCO REFLECTED A DEGREE OF DISILLUSIONMENT WITH ALGERIA WHOSE ARAB-BERBER CULTURE HAD RESISTED SOVIET EFFORTS TO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRUE SOCIALIST STATE.

4. GEORGY SAID THAT HE EXPECTED SOVIET INTEREST IN SOUTHERN AFRICA TO BE REFLECTED IN INCREASED ACTIVITY ON THE BORDERS OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE SOVIET INTEREST IS STRATEGIC: THE BULK OF THE RAW MATERIAL WEALTH OF

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PAGE 03 PARIS 28328 241956Z

AFRICA IS IN THE SOUTH AND PARTICULARLY IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE USSR MIGHT COVET THE WEALTH OF SA BUT PROBABLY DOESN'T NEED IT. THE IMPORTANT THING FROM THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW IS TO BE ABLE TO DENY THESE MATERIALS TO THE WEST. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GEORGY SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THAT THE USSR WOULD STEP UP ITS SUPPORT TO ALL SORTS OF LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN THE SOUTH. THE USSR WOULD NOT COOPERATE WITH THE WEST IN ATTEMPTS AT PEACEFUL EVOLUTION AS IN THE CASE OF NAMIBIA. WE ASKED IF GEORGY THOUGHT THE SOVIETS WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL WHEN THE NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT CAME TO A VOTE. HE RESPONDED INDIRECTLY TO THE EFFECT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NEVER SUPPORT AND THUS GIVE ADDED LEGITIMACY TO THIS KIND OF WESTERN INITIATIVE.

5. GEORGY CAME AWAY FROM MOSCOW SOMEWHAT AWED BY THE HUMAN RESOURCES THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY (NOT TO MENTION OTHER ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT) IS ABLE TO DEVOTE TO AFRICA. WHILE CREDITING THE SOVIETS WITH FAIR KNOWLEDGE OF AFRICA, HE SAID THAT A SIGNIFICANT RUSSIAN ADVANTAGE OVER THE WEST IN AFRICA IS THEIR

"PEASANT PATIENCE." WE IN THE WEST TEND TO EXPEND OUR ENERGIES ON SOLVING IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS WHILE THE RUSSIANS ARE CAPABLE OF TAKING A LONGER TERM VIEW. HE SAID THIS MADE MORE STRIKING WHAT HE TERMED THE MAJOR RUSSIAN ERROR OF CHOOSING TO RIDE THE ETHIOPIAN HORSE. ETHIOPIA IS THE ONE COUNTRY IN AFRICA WITH A CONTINUOUS TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF NATIONAL HISTORY. THE ETHIOPIAN HORSE MIGHT BE RIDDEN TO SHORT TERM TACTICAL OR EVEN STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE AS IN ENCIRCLING SAUDI ARABIA BUT THE SOVIETS CAN ONLY COME A CROPPER IN TERMS OF A PURELY AFRICAN POLICY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS28328
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780348-0277
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780828/aaaaaxan.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ef07a45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PARIS 25714, 78 MOSCOW 19746
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1633333
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH - SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON A/RICA
TAGS: PINT, PDIP, FR, UR, XA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ef07a45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014